

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 DRC-01 /127 W

----- 016958

R 042130Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3076

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 3441

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, JM

SUBJ: HOME GUARD

1. IN A NATION-WIDE TELEVISION ADDRESS OCT 1, THE PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT A "NATIONAL HOME GUARD" WOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO HELP COMBAT CRIME. THE HOME GUARD WOULD BE COMPRISED OF VOLUNTEERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 60 IN THE VARIOUS AREAS OF THE ISLAND WHO WOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR PATROLS, MAINLY IN THE EVENING HOURS. THE GROUPS WOULD BE BUILT UPON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS WHERE THEY EXIST AND OPERATE ONLY IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS. THEY ARE TO BE UNDER THE STRICT SUPERVISION OF THE POLICE. THE PM URGED ALL WOULD-BE VOLUNTEERS TO PRESENT THEMSELVES AT THEIR LOCAL POLICE STATIONS IN ORDER THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT HAVE SOME IDEA AS TO THE NUMBERS THAT IT MIGHT BE ABLE TO COUNT ON. HE PROMISED TO ELABORATE ON THE PROGRAM IN PARLIAMENT AT A LATER DATE.

2. IN THE WAKE OF THE PM'S ANNOUNCEMENT, THE LOCAL RADIO AND TV HAVE CARRIED NIGHTLY MESSAGES ON WAYS TO COMBAT CRIME AND PROTECT THE HOME FIRES.

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3. COMMENT: WHILE IMAGINATIVE MEASURES ARE NEEDED TO HELP

JAMAICA COMBAT ITS CRIME PROBLEM, UNFORTUNATELY, THE HOME GUARD SCHEME APPEARS TO BE ANOTHER PROGRAM PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC IN A BURST OF CAN-DOISM BEFORE IT HAD MATURED IN THE MINDS OF THE POLICY MAKERS. AS MUCH OF THE CRIME IN JAMAICA CONSISTS OF ARMED INCIDENTS, IT WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR AN UNARMED CIVILIAN GUARD TO DEAL WITH. THE WHOLE SCHEME COULD ALSO BE SET BACK CONSIDERABLY WHEN VOLUNTEERS TURN UP AT POLICE STATIONS ONLY TO LEARN THAT THE LOCAL CONSTABLES AND SUPERINTENDENTS HAVE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT. IT ALSO APPEARS THAT, THE PM'S PROTESTATIONS NOTWITHSTANDING, THE POLICE PROFESSIONALS WERE NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONSULTED BEFOREHAND. WHETHER THE SCHEME WILL HAVE ANY EFFECT OR NOT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT IT MAY WELL DIE BEFORE IT IS EVEN GIVEN A CHANCE.

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Message Attributes

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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOME GUARD
TAGS: PINS, JM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005